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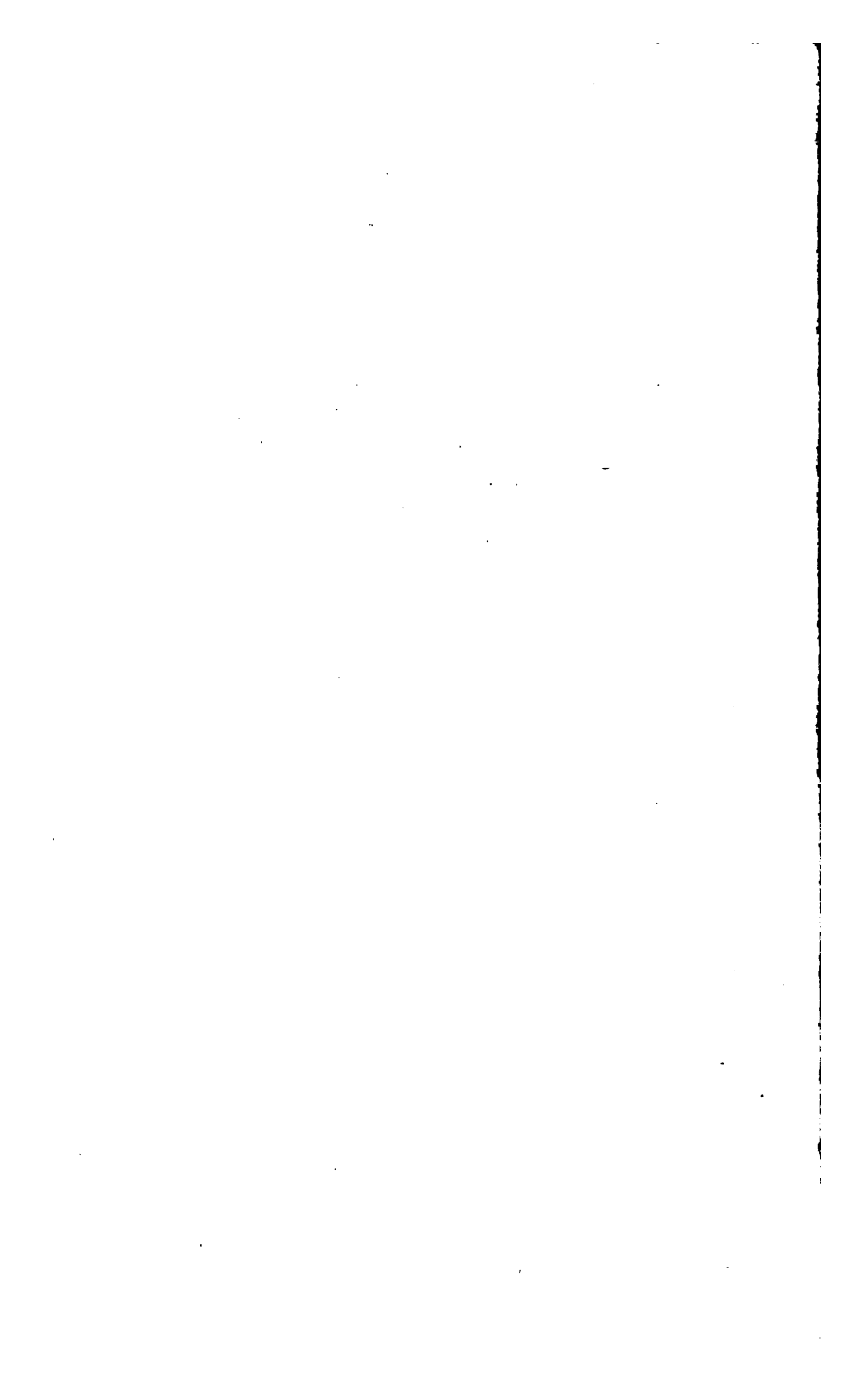
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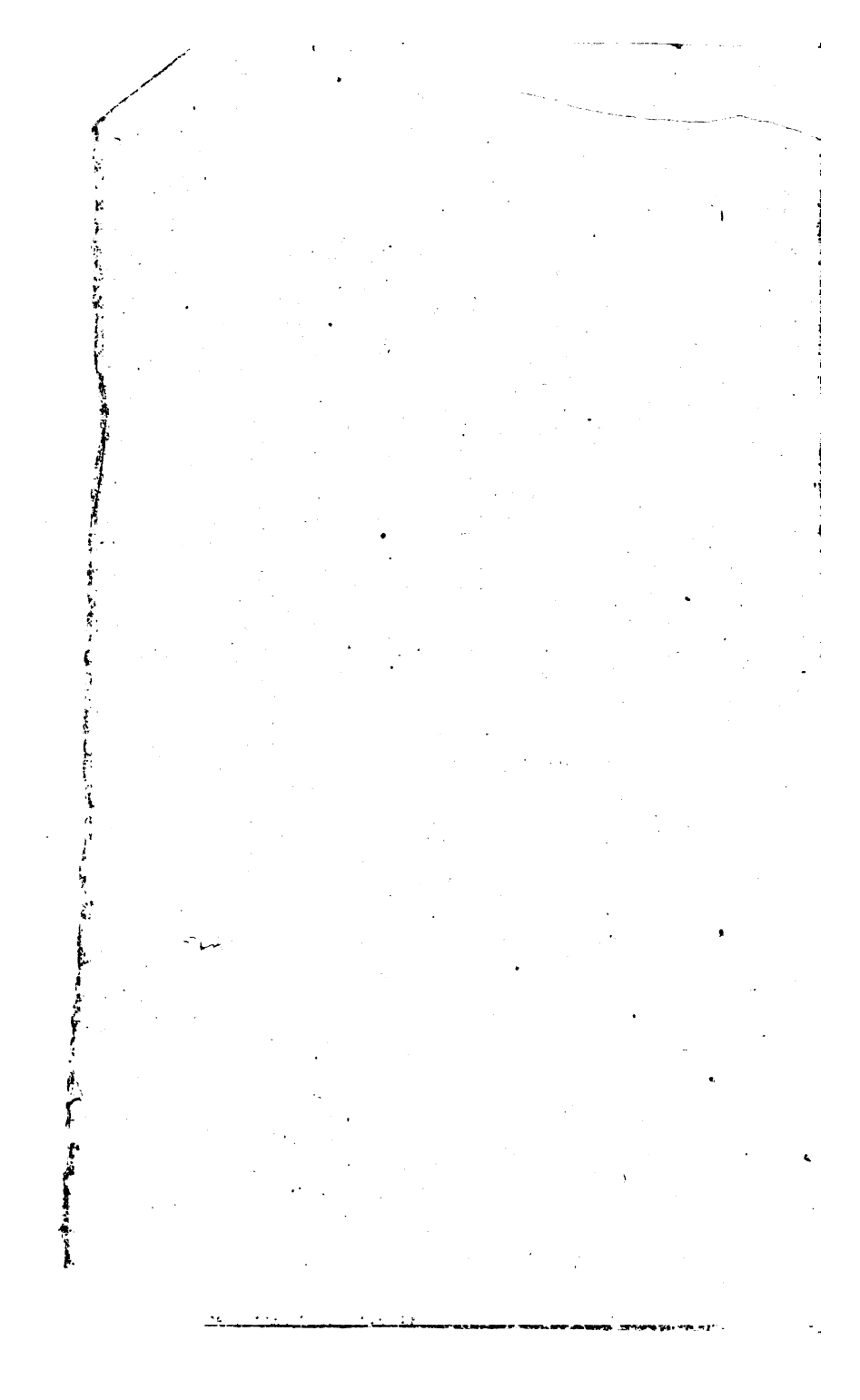
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ADVICE

TO

A YOUNG WOMAN AT SERVICE.



ADVICE

TO

A YOUNG WOMAN AT SERVICE;

IN A

LETTER FROM A FRIEND.

BY THE AUTHOR OF JAMES TALBOT.

PRINTED

FOR THE TRUSTEES OF THE PUBLISHING FUND,

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ADVICE, &c.

My dear Rebecca,

When I first heard that you had come to town, in order to go to service, I was exceedingly anxious for you. For several nights my sleep was disturbed, by thinking of the temptations to which you were exposed among strangers in a great city. Your sister called yesterday, on her way home, and told me that you had got into a respectable family. This good news relieved my mind very much; but still my thoughts dwell upon the trials that every day will bring with it; for you have left your native village, your pious parents, your snug and quiet home, and have placed yourself in a situation where every thing is new: you will therefore have other temptations to resist, and other exertions to make, than have ever been required of you before. My age and long experience, and especially my friendship for your mother, entitle me to some of your regard. I know that your disposition is good, and that you are ready to listen to advice. I have therefore determined, as I cannot conveniently come to you, to write you a letter; it will be a long one, and will cost me a good deal of pains, for I do not often write letters. I shall not expect you to read and destroy it, nor to lay it away in a drawer where it will not be seen; but keep it where you may frequently look at its contents, and always remember that it was written by one who has lived many years, and experienced many changes, and can now say in her old age, that she has never been so happy as when she most nearly conformed to the rules which she now gives to you.

In the first place, I recommend early rising, and let your first thoughts and your first act be devoted to your Maker. The want of time can never be pleaded

as a sufficient excuse for the omission of this sacred duty. Suppose your work requires you to be in the kitchen at five o'clock in summer, and at six in winter; certainly without any injury to your health or *real comfort*, you may rise a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes before that time, to offer your morning sacrifice of prayer and praise. If you have not been in this practice, you may think perhaps that you have no words wherewith to address the Almighty.—But he who made us knows our weakness and ignorance; he pities us as a father pities his children, and lends an ear to the most simple language, if it is spoken in sincerity. Allow yourself a few moments to reflect on the mercies which call for your thanks.—You have been refreshed by sleep—you rise with the use of all your limbs—your eyes have been preserved, and you behold again the light of the pleasant sun. These and innumerable other mercies—for the blessings of God cannot be counted—will give thoughts to your mind and words to your lips. You will have petitions to make for yourself and others:—That you may be faithful to the family in which Providence has placed you—that you may have patience and diligence, forbearance when blamed unjustly, and readiness to amend, if really in fault—that you may be enabled to keep in mind, that the eye of God is upon you, and that he marks against you dishonesty and wastefulness. You will have to throw yourself upon his care, to ask for the strengthening aids of his grace, to implore his pardon for past offences, and to acknowledge with humble gratitude his goodness in permitting you to draw nigh to him, through the blessed Saviour, with your thanks, your petitions, and your confessions. In giving you these hints, I do not mean that you need mention in every prayer, all the subjects I have noticed, or that I have mentioned all that it is proper to make the subject of a prayer. That you live in a christian land, that you can read the bible, that you are acquainted with the tender mercy of Him who loved us and died for us, are most solemn and interest-

ing subjects, and should engage your frequent attention. If you truly love and fear God, the events which are continually taking place, the feelings you experience within yourself, will give you thoughts which you will find no difficulty in expressing. Secret prayer is most useful when we introduce into it the subject that most deeply affects us at the time.—For instance, if you are angry with any one, do not be afraid to turn your thoughts upon this subject, however painful it may be to you; but go to your Father who is in heaven, and ask him to subdue your unruly passion—call up to your mind this fellow being who has offended you, and pray to God to forgive the fault by which you have been injured. Have you received a mercy? Think of all the advantages it procures for you, and compare your present state with what it would have been, had this blessing been withheld.—Are you conscious of a wilful sin, turn not from the distressing subject till you have procured grace for that repentance which leads to amendment; think of the purity and goodness against which you have offended—think of all our Saviour has taught us, of all he suffered, of his labors, and of his death, in order to preserve us against sin and its dreadful consequences. I have dwelt longer upon this topic, because I consider uniform, intimate communion with God, as the only security against temptation. You have read the bible enough to know the promise annexed to the performance of this duty: “Ask and ye shall receive.”

As soon as your wages have supplied your pressing necessities, I advise you to purchase a bible and hymn book. Let them be on good paper and in large print, that you may be able to read them in the evening without injury to your eyes. Get your bible with as handsome a binding as your means will admit—the word of God should be in the best cover we can give it. Be careful that it does not get soiled—keep it in a particular place in your own room, and let it be the beginning of a little library, which I shall hereafter mention. Having finished your morning devotions

you enter upon the business of the day ; but you are not to forget the petitions you have made, or to suppose that no exertion is necessary on your part. God will not grant you the blessing of a calm temper, if you yield to the first provocation or perplexity that comes in your way, and allow yourself to use cross, peevish, or unkind words. He requires on your part, that you keep your lips from speaking harshly, and and that you resist the inclination to act as your angry feelings direct. If you are careful to keep this watch over yourself, rest assured that the grace of God will give you inward peace, even upon occasions calculated to ruffle your temper. I hope you will go down in the morning with your person perfectly neat. Let your clothes be made in the form most convenient for your work, tidy and comfortable. Labour is much more fatiguing with slipshod shoes, and the shoulder straps of the skirt broken, or slipping half way down the arm. A petticoat trailing at every step, or a rent fastened together with pins, is a sad sight, and has a wonderful effect upon the manner in which a young woman does her work. Learned people say that the body affects the mind. You and I, my dear Rebecca, it is true are not learned, but in some things we are all alike. I have experienced within myself how much my character has been formed by outward things. When I was a young girl, and first went to service, my dress was often very slatternly. Mrs D——, the lady with whom I lived, repeatedly rebuked me for this fault. But I had got such a trick of hitching on my clothes in a careless manner, and allowing them to remain ragged and uncomfortable, that though I sincerely desired to please my mistress, I could not prevail upon myself to conquer this bad habit, even though I frequently felt the ill effects of it in doing my work. The untidy feeling I had about my dress, seemed to communicate itself to all that I did. I dragged through my work without spirit, and much of my time was employed in tucking up my sleeves or securing my shoes. An accident, however,

which at the time I thought very unlucky, effected a complete change. Mrs D—— had directed me to set away carefully a pan of milk which was not to be skimmed the following morning, as usual, but reserved till the afternoon, for company. Never did any one more sincerely intend to take care of the dearest thing he had, than I of this milk. I scalded the pan in the best manner, and set it on the coolest shelf in the cellar. The next day Mrs D——'s father and mother, with a strange lady, came to tea. I knew she was very particular to have every thing good and nice when the Judge and his lady came, and I exerted myself to have them so. It was a warm evening, and I left the milk till the last thing; the tea-pot was even filled, the coffee settled, and Stephen, our man, standing with the waiter in his hand, ready to receive the cups that I was just going to fill and send up to the parlor. I ran down cellar for the milk, feeling very happy, and perhaps a little proud that all my things were in such good order. I think it must be forty years since, and yet I remember it as well as if it was but yesterday. I had on a pink calico gown. It had become rather too short, and Mrs D—— had told me to let down the hem, and put a piece of calico round the bottom to supply the place of it. She was very kind, and shewed me how to do it, and particularly charged me to let the piece which was put in come above the old edge of the hem, as it was rather weakened by wear. This direction, however, I did not observe, and my gown was continually tearing at that place. When I put it on, the afternoon of which I am speaking, I observed a rent of nearly a quarter of a yard, and turning up the gown, pinned it together on the wrong side, as I thought very securely. But I was busy, and pin after pin made its escape without my noticing it, and left the hem dangling at the bottom. Coming up the cellar stairs, with the pan of milk, my foot got entangled in the gown; I stumbled and fell. When I recovered myself, which was almost instantly, I stood looking at the empty pan which I held in my hand,

while the milk and cream were flowing abundantly at my feet, till Stephen called to know what was the matter. It was in vain he called—I could not answer him; for though I feared Mrs D——, I loved her much more, and I was distressed that she should be troubled and perplexed. I knew not what to do—we had not another drop of milk in the house, and there was nobody in the neighborhood who kept a cow, or who would be likely to have any milk to spare. All this came at once into my mind, and I burst into tears. Stephen, who was a kind-hearted fellow, said he would run and try to get a little somewhere. With this I was somewhat cheered, and setting the tea and coffee pots by the fire, was drying my eyes, when the parlour bell rang. Stephen was gone, and I was obliged to receive into my own ears, what I knew would be the order to have tea sent up. But I did not expect to hear in addition, “Be as quick as possible, Lois—my father has an engagement at eight o’clock.” I looked at the clock as I passed through the dining room; it was then just half past seven. I ran to the gate and looked up and down the street for Stephen; but he was nowhere to be seen. I returned to the kitchen, poured out a little coffee, to see that it was clear, though I had tried it before—put fire under the boiler, though the water was sending out a great steam. Again I ran to the gate. To my great joy, I espied Stephen at a distance, and ran to meet him.—But before I had time to inquire, I heard the words, “Lois, I cannot get any, high nor low.” At that moment I heard the parlour bell again, and directing Stephen to one place that I suddenly thought of, I ran to the parlour. Mrs D—— asked why tea was not sent up. I whispered to her the accident I had met with. Mrs D—— had the most gentle temper; but I saw she looked worried, and that was far worse than if she had scolded me. When I returned to the kitchen, I found Stephen had arrived with a small quantity of skimmed milk. With that I sent in tea. When the evening was finished, I went to bed, but not to sleep.

I reflected on the cause of my accident; and all the good advice Mrs D. had given me, respecting keeping my person neat, came to my mind. I determined no longer to be a slattern, and as soon as it was light enough to dress, I got up and spent an hour in sewing rips, fastening strings, and making my appearance as decent as possible. When I went down to get breakfast, I was surprised to find with what unusual sprightliness I moved about. A tripping lightness seemed given to my steps, from having my clothes of proper length. My arms too seemed to have double power, now that they were unencumbered by loose, ragged sleeves. I immediately became too sensible of the comfort of a tidy dress, to fall back into my former careless habits, and have never since had reason to lament an accident that was the cause of so useful a change.

Your sister informed me that you were to be the cook in Mr L's family. This is a great undertaking for you; but do not be discouraged. Two things only are necessary, *observation* and *care*. With these qualities, if kept in regular exercise, you will soon acquire sufficient knowledge to perform the business of your station in a proper manner, and without great anxiety. In the first place, fix it well upon your mind, that the provision you are to cook is the property of your master; that you are hired and receive your wages in order to take care of this part of his estate; and that you defraud him whenever, through your neglect, its value is lessened by bad cooking. The recollection of this truth will, I trust, make you always endeavour to do the best in your power; and will also prevent all disposition to practise those little deceptions, the wickedness of which is got over by the false notion, that whatever a domestic eats herself is not stealing; even though she may know at the time that she is taking what was designed alone for the parlor, or to be used on some particular occasion. It is always stealing, when you put to your own use any thing which you would be afraid to have the family

see you take. Perhaps you will better understand what I mean by a story that was told to me by the young woman herself, who was the guilty subject of it. It shows that a want of honesty, even in little things, sooner or later brings disgrace and poverty.

This young woman had the misfortune of being very fond of eating and drinking. She ate rather to gratify her palate, than to satisfy her hunger, and reconciled herself to this fault by thinking that, as she had not many pleasures—as she could not dress, and sit in a pleasant parlor, and see company like the young ladies of the family—there was therefore no great harm in supplying her stomach with any delicacies that came in her way. Her mistress often expressed surprise at the disappearance of cranberry sauce, jellies, &c., and the badness of the coffee was often the subject of complaint at the breakfast table. Susan coloured when any inquiry was made into the cause of this mismanagement; for she was conscious of her own evil practices. But lying, and deceptive actions go hand in hand; and she soon learned to find excuses, such as the bad quality of the coffee, or the improper burning of it, to account for its flatness, though she knew in her heart what was the real cause; for, in order to indulge herself, she made the coffee an hour or two before the usual breakfast time, and, having poured off her own, added water to what was sent to the parlor.

Fortunately for her these tricks were at last discovered; the lady with whom she lived reproved her, and pointed out the wickedness of such conduct. But alas! it is very hard to overcome a bad practice, when it has grown into a habit. The discovery of Susan's deceptions, and the reproof which followed, checked her for a few days only, she soon fell back into her old ways, and was shortly after dismissed from the family.

Her reputation as a smart, capable girl was so high, that she soon had the prospect of an excellent place. The person, however, who thought of taking her into her service went first to inquire about her character of the lady whom she had just left. It was painful to

this lady to be obliged to give the reason for which she had dismissed Susan, but she did not hesitate to do it, for she knew it was her duty. The person, who inquired, when she found what her character was, would not take her into her family. This was a sad disappointment to poor Susan, but it was light to the distress she felt, when after two months' trial, she found it impossible to get employment. Having no near relations, she was obliged to pay for her board when out of a place; in this way she ran very much in debt which she had no means of discharging. She pawned her clothes—one article after another—till she was left almost entirely destitute; and at last was obliged to go out to daily washing. Her strength was not equal to such hard work, and it brought on a fever. Her sufferings were very great; for she needed many of the comforts which sickness requires. The woman with whom she lived, though not unkind, was poor herself, and seeing no prospect of Susan's recovery, she applied to the overseers of the poor to have her received into the almshouse, where she was carried the next day.

When she realized her situation, and saw herself surrounded by people, many of whom had been brought to the condition, which they were in, by very great misfortunes or by the want of early advantages of schooling, good parents, or natural capacity; and remembered how many advantages she had had, and that it was her own misconduct which had brought her to the almshouse, her conscience was awakened and her mind filled with horror. She threw herself upon the little bed, that was prepared for her use, in an agony of grief. A sleepless night increased her fever, but the pains of her mind were greater than those of her body, severe as they were. Susan had felt before this very sorry for her faults, for they had been the cause of all her difficulties, but there is a great difference between such sorrow and the grief which springs from the consciousness of having offended God. It was this genuine, this suitable grief which now touched her heart and produced a sincere penitence.

Susan had been in the alms-house but a few weeks, when the lady, by whom she had been dismissed, hearing of her situation kindly went to see her, and finding in her evident proofs of real repentance, and intention to amend, she restored her to her service, in which she has been the last ten years distinguished for her faithfulness and honesty; and as she herself has told me, a thousand times more happy than she had ever been before.

Susan's story has taken up more time than I can well spare. We must now return to the subject of cooking. I have before remarked that *observation* and *care* are both necessary. Every well regulated family has a particular hour for each meal; you may therefore soon learn how much time is required for the preparation of any dish that you may have to cook. If, for instance, you are going to roast a joint of meat; look at the clock when you put it at the fire, that you may know exactly how long it was doing; and if at the dinner hour you find it over-done or too rare, be mindful when you have the same thing to do again, that you begin with it a little earlier or later, as you may find necessary; and when you have hit upon the right time for doing it properly, set it down in a little book, which I advise you to keep for that purpose, to assist your memory. This is *observation*. But *care* is equally important. If you are roasting, have an eye to the fire, that it does not fall into the gravy; that the meat does not burn, and that it be frequently basted; that in winter your dishes be hot, and, whether summer or winter, that they be ready to your hand when you are going to take up dinner. Do not undertake too much at one time, especially when cooking, for even a plain dinner requires very constant attention, to have it perfectly nice. And it should always be your aim to make every thing you cook as good as possible. Let it be your ambition and your happiness to send the dishes up to the table in a manner that will gratify the family. Enter into their feelings; think of the master of the house returning from his business, exhausted by long

fasting; and of the lady fatigued by the cares of her family, and anxious that her table should do honor to the expence by which it had been supplied. Let this make you in earnest to perform your part with all the skill in your power; sparing neither your time, your strength, nor your thoughts. People who live out would make much greater exertion to do well, if they brought the case home to themselves. Suppose by labour and saving you had earned a gown, would you not blame the mantua-maker, who, laughing and talking or thinking of her own affairs, should spoil it in the cutting? You give an equal cause for blame, whenever, by neglect, the dinner is badly cooked, for it is both a loss and a disappointment.

Make it a point of conscience to have every thing perfectly clean, which is used about food. Remember the rule to do unto others as you would have others do to you. A want of cleanliness is always a *fault*, but in general it carries with it no deception; a dirty house or person is exposed to every eye; in cooking it is more concealed and more injurious, and therefore becomes a greater fault. Have your cooking utensils not only clean, but bright, that you may be able to see the slightest foulness upon them; and let the places where you keep provision be perfectly sweet and well aired.

Be submissive and willing to be taught. It is foolish vanity to pretend to know every thing. Attend patiently to the instructions of the lady with whom you live, and do not give her the trouble to repeat them a second time. Let her see not only that you are ready to observe her rules at the time she lays them down, but that you keep them in remembrance, and are careful to shew your respect by obedience to all her regulations.

A cook has many temptations to resist. Your appetite will often crave indulgence, while you are preparing nice dishes, and will tempt you to taste of whatever is savoury. This, to say nothing of its want of cleanliness, is a trick very injurious to health;

it destroys the appetite for regular meals, and disorders the stomach. While I recommend the comfort and gratification of the family as your first care, I would not have you unmindful of your own. Endeavour to preserve your appetite for dinner, and let the kitchen table be neatly spread; sit down to it with a cheerful, thankful heart—and if you have fellow servants, try to make them comfortable, both as it respects what they eat, and your manner towards them. Be kind and pleasant, and, if possible, talk of useful subjects during the meal. But do not sit longer than is necessary to the refreshment of your body; for your work is not yet done, and you should never indulge yourself with more rest than is absolutely necessary, till your customary work is accomplished. Let me earnestly entreat you never to allow yourself the use of any strong drink with your dinner, or at any other time. Water is the most wholesome and becoming, for a young woman. When your appetite fails, do not attempt, I beseech you, to bring it by a glass of spirits or cordial; but wait patiently till the next meal; if you are in health, a few more hours of fasting will give a relish to your food, and if your want of appetite is occasioned by indisposition, it is much better to go without eating, till you have taken medicine.

Nothing will so much lighten your labours as order; let every thing have its own place, that you may be able to put your hand on it at once. It is very teasing to have to look for a thing in a hurry; and it heats and worries one more and takes more time, than to do a considerable portion of useful business. Do not allow yourself to get surrounded by dishes, kettles, slops, &c.; but put things away as you use them. There is great beauty in the sight of a neat woman, without any bustle and disorder, skilfully managing the business of the kitchen. I know it requires good sense; but, my dear Rebecca, let not this discourage you. Sense and learning are different things; the last

you have not, but *sense*, which consists principally in a good judgment, you have great opportunities of improving by the business in which you are engaged. Providence never places us in a situation where we may not grow wiser every day, if we will take pains. Sometimes poor people get the best knowledge; it will soon be of no importance, even if you were rich, whether you can play on a piano-forte or work muslin and paint, like the young ladies whom you serve, for middle life and old age will soon overtake you, and then these things will be of little consequence. But a good judgment is always useful and gives importance to the very poorest person. This respectable quality you have, as I said before, great opportunities of improving.

You cannot boil a vegetable properly without exercising your judgment. Take, for instance, a cauliflower and a beet; the first you see is loose, and when put into the pot, that the water will come to every separate leaf, and as they are thin, will be soon boiled; but the beet is close and hard, and if you think a moment, you will perceive that it will take a good while for the heat to reach the middle, and consequently it will take much longer to boil it than the cauliflower. Now supposing you had never seen either of these vegetables before, you ought to think and exercise your judgment about the proper time for cooking them, and by exercising you would strengthen and improve it. But if you go on with your work in a heedless, indifferent manner, and do things in a helter-skelter way, you will gain none of the advantages which your situation admits; but will have the hard work without the wisdom that it is calculated to give. This is making but a poor use of poverty.

Do not allow yourself to be discouraged by the prospect of an unusually toilsome day, or suppose yours a hard fate, because you are obliged to work. You may think, perhaps, on a bright sun-shiny morning, that those who are going to ride into the country,

or are setting out on a journey are happier than yourself, confined, as you must be, to the business of the kitchen. But in this you are mistaken. We are always happiest when usefully employed, at least for any length of time. It is possible that those who are setting out on a party of pleasure may feel in the morning more lively than yourself, but it is ten chances to one that their spirits will not hold out through a long summer's day; they become fatigued, have the head-ach, or some little cross accident puts them out, and all goes wrong with them. While you at home are cheerfully going on with your work, preserving your health and spirits, by useful exercise, that rich people are often obliged to keep, or to get, by riding about far from their comfortable homes.

But to return to a busy day. Do not, when it comes, put yourself into a violent hurry. Be active and lively, but not impatient and noisy; do not throw things about and destroy more than your work is worth; but be calm and steady, and finish one thing before you begin another. You will be surprised to find how much in this way may be done in the course of twelve hours, and will look back with wonder, at night, on all the business that pressed upon you in the morning. There are, I know, some times when with our best endeavours, every thing will seem to go wrong. These, when I was a young woman and lived out, I used to call my dark days;—a China dish is broken, an accident spoils the pudding, the bread does not rise, and a variety of such vexations will come all at once.—But do not suppose, because it happens to-day, that it will be so always; or that the same, or similar things would not sometimes take place if you were in any other family. Keep up your spirits with the thought that: "The darkest day, live till tomorrow, will have passed away," or "Time and the hour run through the roughest day." Or what is better than any other considerations, keep constantly in mind that little as well as great things are under an overruling Providence, and if we have

done all in our power to prevent it, we must not murmur at an unlucky accident. It is sent to try our temper, to increase our knowledge, or to improve us in some way or other, if we make a right use of it.

And here I am reminded of one piece of advice, that I should have been sorry to have forgotten; which is to learn to *bear being blamed*; it is a hard lesson, I know, at least it seemed so to me when I was young, for I was very ambitious, and not a little proud. I might have gone on a great while pouting, or making a pert answer, whenever any fault was found with me, if it had not been for our washer-woman, who was a very pious and thinking woman. One morning when I had made some rye cakes, I was exceedingly vexed when they came from the table almost as I sent them up, with the message that they were both sour and heavy. When I called Mrs Cummin in to breakfast, for it was washing day, I began with holding up cake after cake and asking her if she did not think it light? "Why," said she, "it looks pretty well to me, for I have been hard at work and am hungry, and besides do not often see these good things; those who taste them every day, and are used to the very nicest kind, can judge better than I, whether they are exactly right or not—but you seem to be in a pet this morning, what is the matter, Lois?" I told her; and complained loudly of the hardship of living out, and difficulty of pleasing. Though I knew in my heart all the time that there was not in the whole country a better family than the one I lived in. But when temper gets the mastery, we forget all the kindness we have received, and all the gratitude we owe. "Ah," said Mrs Cummin, "you do not take this matter right; the world, Lois, will go very hard with you, at this rate. Come, pour me out another dish of coffee, and let us see if we cannot make a better use of this mishap than fretting. Did you ever make rye cakes before?" "Yes, indeed, twenty times." "Were they ever found fault with?" "No."

"Were they no lighter than these?" I could not tell a lie, and was obliged to say they had always been more light. "Then something," continued Mrs Cummin, "is amiss; can't you remember what it was?" Why I put in some old cream, I suppose that made them taste sour." "But don't you always do that, if you happen to have it in the house?" Yes, certainly, and I sweeten it with pearlash." "Didn't you put pearlash in to-day?" Yes. "How much?" "Why I was in a hurry to get your tubs, and did not measure it." "Ah," said Mrs Cummin, "I have found it out at last; you put in the pearlash hap-hazard, and did not take enough to sweeten your cream—come, come, Lois, this will after all be a lucky morning, for you have learnt two lessons. The first is, never do any thing in a hurry, and the second, always measure pearlash, or any other such like powerful stuff, because a little too much or not quite enough may give a very bad taste to the thing you are making." It proved indeed a lucky morning; the hint Mrs Cummin gave me was better than a present of a hundred dollars, for it taught me to make a profit by blame. Ever after this, when fault was found with my cooking or other work, instead of losing my temper or falling into tears, which by the way are oftener brought by temper than grief, I sat myself to find out the cause of my failure, and when discovered, I took good care not to fall into the same error a second time. In this way I made gradual improvement from day to day, and rose from the lowest office in the kitchen to that of a house-keeper, when the lady, with whom I had always lived, lost her health, and needed somebody to oversee her family. In this situation I remained till I was married; my husband kept a grocery store in the neighbourhood, and he has told me many a time that he chose me because he had seen me so long at one place. I do not promise that steadiness will bring about the same event to you, but there is certainly no doubt that it is a great recommendation to a young woman. I have not time to tell

you all the disadvantages of shifting places. The carelessness and indifference it encourages, and the love of change which it increases, have a very bad effect upon the character. Much happiness too is lost by frequent change; for the longer you live in a family the more you will feel interested in its concerns, you will probably love the family better, and will consequently be more happy; for the more we love, the happier we are.

I have said nothing yet of *economy*. This word you know means something very different from stinginess. It is an attention that nothing be wasted, either by carelessness or extravagance.

And here let me speak a word in behalf of the poor, who may be fed from your master's table. Remember that they have the same feelings, the same wants, the same likings and dislikes, as yourself, and think how you would feel, if you needed the food which had already passed over two tables, to see a want of delicacy in the manner in which it had been put away.—If meat and fish, pudding and vegetables, were all huddled together in one dirty dish, would you not think that she who had fared sumptuously, might have taken care that what was reserved for a hungry fellow creature should at least be decent? It is the generosity of the master of the family, which supplies these provisions for the poor; but you will share his reward, if you sincerely desire and endeavour that the fragments of the table be as inviting in appearance, as palatable and wholesome, as it is in your power to make them. Suppose you have, instead of one, half a dozen dishes to wash, what is that trouble compared with the pleasure of thinking, that you have done all you could to make a poor family comfortable?

And here I would take the opportunity to warn you against disposing of any thing without the knowledge of the lady with which you live, let your desire to give be ever so great; bestow not a piece of bread without her leave, unless you have received

general orders to do it. There is no generosity, but a great deal of sin, in giving away, without permission, what is not our own.

But to return to the subject of saving, which is very important to one in your situation. There is a great deal wasted by making too much of one thing to suit to another; for instance, too much paste for the apple, or too much apple for the paste. For this reason, it is better to be in the habit of weighing and measuring; it will save you a deal of care and trouble in the end. Exercise your judgment in the use of vegetables. Calculate the number of persons in the family, and cook no more than is necessary. In the city, where animals are not kept about the house, few things turn to so little account as cold vegetables. Now by an attention to this, by observing what kind is most frequently left after dinner, or with what meat the most or least are eaten, you will soon learn to suit the quantity of vegetables to your other dishes, and will have none to throw away. Thus in this single article by care you will make a very considerable saving. Suppose, however, it should only be three cents a day, and it would not require many vegetables to amount to that sum, in a year you save for the family whom you serve \$10.95. This will give you pleasure to think of, though nobody but yourself knows it.

Few are so wicked or thoughtless as to waste and destroy in large quantities; but a great deal is lost by inattention to trifles. One is apt to think that a very small thing is not worth taking care of, especially if it belongs to the rich; but a number of small things is equal to one that is large—and if you waste a little every day, at the end of a week or a month it amounts to a great deal. Its being owned by the rich is no excuse. Our Saviour has clearly expressed his disapprobation of wastefulness; for though he had the power of creating provision, yet after the multitude whom he fed were satisfied, he commanded the fragments to be gathered up, "that nothing be lost."

But while I recommend this care of the property of others, I must not forget the lesson I have in store for you, respecting the use of your own little fortune which I know, my dear Rebecca, consists alone in your wages. You must not be offended if I deal plainly with you, for you know I can have no motive but your good.

I do not know how much money you have to spend in a year, because I have not heard what wages you have, but this general rule I can give with safety,—to spend less than you receive. It is the too common practice of young women at service to lay out all their wages upon dress. This is foolish on every account. They do not appear so well, dressed in a manner unbecoming their station. Things never look handsomely out of place ;—a sofa covered with silk, though very pretty for a drawing room, would make but a sorry appearance in a kitchen, amidst the steam of washing tubs and cooking. Beauty consists much in propriety.—Now we know that there are several uses for money, have we much or little ; a part is to be laid up for sickness or old age, a part is to be given to others, and a part bestowed upon ourselves. A poor person has of course a much smaller portion to bestow upon herself than a rich one ; it cannot therefore be proper for a poor girl to attempt to dress like her mistress, and when she does, it makes her appear ridiculous, improvident, and selfish. An extravagant love of dress has brought many to trouble and disgrace.

I am not fond of sad stories ; but the history of Lydia Tilden is so striking an example of the danger of extravagance that I tell it as a warning to you. She was the only child of her father, who himself was poor and blind ; he loved his daughter exceedingly, and Lydia thought she loved her father. So she did, better than any body or any thing else in the world except fine clothes. About five or six years ago she came to town to get a place, and soon found one where she had very high wages, for she could cook,

and wash, and iron, and turn her hand to any thing, and besides was the most obliging, good humoured creature in the world. Nobody wondered that her father loved her, for Lydia was a favourite wherever she went. Month after month soon slipped away and twenty dollars became due. Before she was paid, the lady, with whom she lived, gave her some excellent advice about the manner of spending her money. Had Lydia paid attention, and been governed by it, all would have been well. But her heart was set upon having a Leghorn straw bonnet, and as soon as she had done up her work in the afternoon she asked permission to go out, and hastened to a milliner's to buy one. Here she saw a great variety, but there was one trimmed with plaid ribbon, that particularly struck her fancy; the price of it was ten dollars; she hesitated, turned it round and round, thought of her poor father's wants, and of her own too, for she was very destitute of comfortable clothes, as you may suppose, for she had hitherto had no opportunity of earning any thing. She laid the Leghorn bonnet on the counter, and was looking at some neat ones made of Dunstable straw, when a lady came into the shop with a bonnet just like the expensive one she admired so much. Lydia examined the bonnet on the lady's head again and again, she admired it more than ever, and hesitated no longer, but returned to the counter where it lay, and paid her ten dollars. It is not very unusual for one act of extravagance to be followed by another; this was the case with poor Lydia.—On her way home she passed a jeweller's shop, and was reminded by some combs at the window, that she wanted one for herself. To do her justice, she had intended only to buy a horn one; but she could not pass without just looking at these.—They were of beautiful turtle-shell; she put one in her hair and looked into the glasses that hung round the shop. Lydia did not know the danger of running into temptation. Her head she thought looked in the glass as well as Miss Catharine's, and though to be sure she was not as rich

a lady, she did not see why a poor girl might not have a handsome comb. She ventured to ask the price, and found it four dollars. Well, said she to herself, I shall still have six dollars left, and that I will send to my dear father. For if I can only have this beautiful comb, I shall not care what old tatters I wear about my work. But tatters will not hang together for ever, and Lydia found very soon that she must buy a gown, an apron, and a pair of shoes. She had just bought these, and was shewing them to the chambermaid, when she saw Mr Fowler, her father's next door neighbour, come into the gate.—She was overjoyed, dropt her new things, and ran to meet him, but wondered he did not smile, till he said, “ Lydia, I have got some bad news for you ; your father is very sick, and I have come to town on purpose to tell you that I am afraid he is suffering, too, for the want of comforts.” Poor Lydia turned as pale as death.—How hateful to her then was her Leghorn bonnet and turtle-shell comb. She knew not what to do, for she was ashamed to ask her mistress to lend her money, as it would expose her extravagance and neglect of good advice. Mr Fowler saw her distress, and though he was a poor man himself, offered to lend her a little sum to send to her father. She accepted his kindness with many tears and thanks, and promised to pay him the next time he came to market. For some days her thoughts were taken up with her father, but having learnt that he was better, she forgot her debt to Mr Fowler, and all she had suffered ; and spent her wages as fast as she received them.—She always intended to be more prudent, and more dutiful, and to send the next sum she received to her father. She even sent him word to take up things at a grocer's on her account, but the time never came when she had money to spare for her poor old father's debts, and he was dreadfully distressed on account of it. There was a young man by the name of Morgan, who had been attracted by Lydia's shewy dress, and had paid her much attention, which she however did

not receive very pleasantly, for she did not like his manners, which were rude and his conversation sometimes profane. But he was artful, and seeing that Lydia was vain, was not to be discouraged by her coldness; not that he wanted to marry her, but he had in view a wicked plot. Lydia had got an expensive pelisse, very highly trimmed, for which she had run in debt; the payment was called for, but she had not the means of meeting the demand.—She was very much alarmed, her spirits sunk. Morgan observed it, and suspected the cause, and with many expressions of sorrow for her distress, told her that he had some money that he would divide with her if she would get it exchanged. Poor Lydia was a simple girl from the country. She did not know the wickedness there is in the world.—She had never heard of counterfeit money, and her only scruple about taking it, was, her unwillingness to lay herself under obligations to Morgan. But she knew not what to do; the debt must be paid immediately; she had already taken up wages in advance, and was several months' work in debt to her mistress.—With an aching heart she accepted Morgan's offer, changed the money, and paid the debt.—When all the family had retired to rest, Lydia sat crying in her own room, thinking of her undutiful conduct to her father, and of all her folly, when the bell of the street door rung violently; she called William, the man servant, who soon returned from the door and spoke to her in a low voice, "Do not be frightened, Lydia, I will go call my master." "Why should I be frightened!" said she, trembling, for she had a dread of something she knew not what. "There is a man, I am afraid it is a constable, who says he must see you." Poor Lydia heard no more; sense and motion failed her. William awaked the family.—It was soon discovered that Lydia had passed two counterfeit bills. She was immediately carried before a justice, and that very night conveyed to prison. I will not attempt to describe her feelings—I have no words for it. She laid in prison several months.

Sickness and shame wasted her to a skeleton. But when her poor blind father came to her dismal abode to hear once more the voice he loved so well, she could not gratify him, her distress prevented the power of speaking; she could only cling round his neck and sob till she fell into fits. At length the court sat, and in consideration of her ignorance of the crime she had committed, of which there was soon evidence that I have not time mention, she was not condemned to the State Prison, where Morgan was sentenced. But alas, her fate was very severe. She returned to her native village—but her father had died of grief; and none of her former acquaintances noticed her, she fell into melancholy and a lingering disease, and lived but a short time. Thus a pleasant, kind hearted young woman was destroyed by a love of dress.—Had she exerted resolution at first, she might have conquered it; but instead of controuling, she yielded to all the vain wishes than rose up in her mind. May you, my dear Rebecca, have more firmness; for you know not to what straits you may be brought by giving way to the first temptation.

You may perhaps think that as old age is to you so distant, it is hardly worth while to begin so soon to lay up money for its wants; and as sickness may never come, it is as well to have the spending of your wages now as at any time. But it is very dangerous to act upon such a notion; for there is not one in a thousand who escapes sickness for many years together, and old age, though slow in its progress, comes on with a steady step. And even should you be provided for by a respectable connection in marriage, you would be glad of a little money to help furnish a house; you would feel happier to be able to give the man you marry some proof of your past industry and prudence.

Do not think because your earnings are small, that it is not worth while to save; for a good deal may be done with moderate wages. But I will be more partic-

ular, that you may understand me. I will suppose that you have a dollar a week, which will give you every year an income of fifty-two dollars. Out of this, I would have you put ten dollars a year into the Savings Bank. This bank was designed for the use of those who receive their money in small parcels; it is taken care of by some benevolent gentlemen, who are willing to give their time and attention for the benefit of poor people; and it is a pity that those who work hard for their money should neglect to place a part of it in this safe depository. If you persevere twenty years in the practice of putting ten dollars yearly in the Savings Bank, you will have at the end of that time, including the interest, three hundred and twenty seven dollars, and thirty-eight cents. Your age will be thirty-eight, and if then in single life what a comfort it will be to you to have this little stock in reserve. You may at that time of life wish for more independence, or may sigh to return to your native town. How pleasant it would be to have it in your power to furnish a room, to have one of your sisters or nieces live with you, and together with yourself take in work amongst your own people, and in the neighborhood of your relations and earliest friends. Or if you should prefer remaining in the family where you are, your stock might go on increasing, till in old age you might have enough to live in some degree of ease.

When ten dollars are placed in the Savings Bank, you will have forty-two remaining; from this lay by five for charitable uses. It is but a small sum, to be sure, but a great deal of good, a great many little kind actions, may be done in the course of a year with five dollars. Half a yard of muslin will make your mother a cap; I have no doubt she will be glad of one on Thanksgiving day, when some of her children will no doubt be able to visit her. Now let us see how much it would cost. Very decent muslin can be bought for four shillings a yard; the muslin will therefore cost two shillings. You will not probably have time to

make it yourself; but the money which pays for making will still be used in charity, if you employ some poor woman, who takes in sewing, to make it. If you give her a shilling, that will buy her and her family an excellent dinner. Thus, with only one tenth part of your five dollars, you will give your mother a cap, and a poor family a dinner.

Now let us see if the thirty-seven dollars you have remaining will not even more than supply your reasonable wants. You will be able probably to knit your winter stockings; I shall therefore set down woollen yarn amongst the necessary articles.

Cotton, flannel, yarn,	-	-	-	\$6.00
Shoes	-	-	-	7.00
12 yds. calico, or gingham, for two gowns	-	-	-	3.00
White cambric	-	-	-	2.00
6 yards bombazet	-	-	-	2.50
4 ' for skirt	-	-	-	1.33
4 ' dimity	-	-	-	1.33
2 pair cotton stockings	-	-	-	1.00
Mantua-maker, aprons, pocket handkerchiefs,	}			5.00
gloves, muslin, ribbon, combs, thread, &c.				
				\$29.16

You see by this rough estimate of the cost of necessary clothing, that you still have left seven dollars and eighty-four cents. This you may want for some large article, as a coat, &c. Some things which I have mentioned now, such as a white cambric gown, dimity, skirt, &c. you will not want the next year, and you will consequently have the money for other articles which you may then need.

You understand that should your wages be higher than I have supposed, you will have more than ten dollars to lay up, and more than five to give away;—for I advise you to bestow a tenth part of your earnings, whatever sum it be, upon your parents, or in other charity, until you have a family to maintain.—And even then I hope by economy and self-denial you

will still reserve something for acts of kindness, and attention to your parents, or to those who may be more destitute than yourself; for "it is more blessed to give than to receive."

You see I have made no provision for the purchase of shewy and expensive things, because, as I said before, they are not becoming; and besides, if you lay out your money to please your fancy, you will have little left to make you comfortable. And I wish that you should dress in a manner that wise and judicious people would call handsomely, for handsomeness, as I said before, consists much in propriety. When there is a military review, you admire the bright and splendid dresses of the officers; but you would not like to see your brother going out to his day's work with a red coat and plumes nodding in his cap. Should you think it made him look more like a gentleman or more respectable than the clean short jacket and straw hat which he now wears?

Young women at service are very much mistaken, when they suppose that a fine dress brings them more nearly upon an equality with the ladies whom they serve. Dress raises nobody, be their station high or low, though if they dress more than they can afford, it lowers them in the esteem of every wise person.—It is virtue and knowledge which raise the poor to an equality with the rich. Do you wish to be equal with the fine ladies you see?—try to be good; clothe your heart with ornaments, and you will feel the inward satisfaction of equality in that which alone is truly important. She is indeed superior to her mistress, who excels her in virtue. "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city."

Do not suppose, because I have recommended a plain dress, that I would have you feel as if you were in a low, degraded state. Far otherwise. We are all in some respects upon an equality. We have the same country, the same religion, the same virtues to exer-

cise; the same wrong passions and desires to subdue, and the same hopes of immortality after this life, which must soon close with all. But our Creator, for wise purposes, has made our outward state, at least for a time, in some things to differ. Many are rich, while others are poor; but there is a continual shifting of circumstances, especially in our happy country, where all have an opportunity of rising by virtue and industry.

If your conduct, my dear Rebecca, is irreproachable, if you are distinguished by discretion and industry, though you may not rise yourself much above your present station, yet you may lay the foundation of your children's honor; you may see them growing into notice, becoming rich and respectable citizens, entrusted with high offices, and holding a rank in society, which you may now look upon as far beyond your reach. Let the possibility of yourself or your children's becoming what I have described keep your spirit high. By a *high spirit*, I do not mean a quickness to resent an affront, a pride in dress, or a pert behavior; but such a *high spirit* as will keep you from a mean action, from all those little, base deceptions to avoid blame, or to gain unmerited credit, which lower a person far more than poverty. By a *high spirit*, I mean one which scorns to tell a lie, and which is too proud to be angry at every cross accident.

True delicacy, true refinement, my dear Rebecca, is in the heart, and does not in the least depend on the whiteness of the hand, or the fineness and fashion of a gown. She can never feel in a degraded state, who, amidst the labors of the kitchen, can look beyond this life, and see in another world the crown that is laid up for those who fear God; who, looking for a heavenly reward, is faithful in the discharge of all her duties.— This, my dear Rebecca, is true greatness; it is riches, it is honor, it is all that makes us truly noble.

It may perhaps sometimes seem strange to you, that your lot should be cast so differently from that of the

lady whom you serve. You may possibly think yourself less happy ; but I believe you are mistaken. Happiness is pretty equally divided ; it is not of the same sort, I allow, but let us see which is likely to enjoy most—you or your mistress. She rises in the morning, not indeed with the prospect of laboring with her hands through the day, but she has labors of a more difficult and anxious kind to perform. She has to form the minds of her children, to subdue their headstrong tempers, to regulate their desires, to give them knowledge, to check what is wrong, and guide them to what is right. You enjoy their kindness and gentle manners, but you know nothing of the labor it has cost their mother to make them what they are. In the care of the family there are difficulties and perplexities you know nothing of ; they are locked up in the bosom of your mistress, with a thousand other anxieties, which may arise from the state of her husband's health, business, &c. From all these cares you are free. When you leave your bed room, you have no uncertainties as to what is best to be done, or how your time shall be most profitably employed. Your work is before you, and you have nothing to do but to set yourself diligently about it. When you have faithfully performed the business of the day, you can enjoy your leisure hours undisturbed by anxieties. What satisfaction there is, when you retire to refresh yourself in the afternoon, in your chamber, in thinking that you have been useful. Great pleasure too will often arise from success ; a dinner cooked remarkably well gives a feeling of capability that will reward all your labour. The exercise you have taken not only preserves health but gives you the enjoyment of rest.

I before promised to recommend a little library to you. The leisure you will probably enjoy in some part of the summer afternoons and winter evenings I wish you to improve to the best advantage. Most of the time thus given you by the kindness of your

mistress, you will find necessary to employ in sewing, in order to keep your clothes whole and tidy. But I think you will not find it difficult, with uniform industry, to reserve one hour a day for reading and writing. I cannot recommend too strongly the practice of writing letters to your parents and brothers and sisters; it will keep alive your affection for them, beside the pleasure you will give, and the improvement you will make yourself in writing, and spelling, and the power of expressing your thoughts. You can keep a letter begun, and write on it at different times till you have filled your paper, or said all that you may wish to communicate.

When you have procured a bible and hymn-book, I advise you to purchase a dictionary; and then as your circumstances will permit, you may indulge yourself now and then with buying a useful tract, or larger book; many of these are sold very cheap. I have read again and again, with profit and pleasure, a tract that cost but three cents. Many of these will afford you an innocent entertainment in a winter evening, such as *The Contented Man*, *Blind Ellen*, *The Shepherd of Salisbury Plain*, &c; For more serious reading, there are *Law's Serious Call*, *Baxter's Saint's Rest*, and many others.

By allowing yourself one book a year, you will in time get a pretty collection; but do not ever buy, or even read one, without asking the advice of some good person, for there are bad books in circulation, such as I should be sorry to have you even look at;—and many more foolish ones, which it is a mere waste of time to read.

Endeavor to arrange your work, so as to have as little as possible to do on the Sabbath. Many things, even relating to cooking, may be got ready the evening before. But the leisure you thus gain is not to be spent in idleness; improve every opportunity that is given you on the Lord's day to attend public worship. And when there, remember the purpose for which

you came. Be attentive to every part of the service, let not your eyes wander; this is not the place where you are to learn how a ribbon is to be put on, or what colour is the fashion. I almost tremble when I think how many go to the house of God with light thoughts and vain motives. My dear Rebecca, may it never be your unhappiness to have mispent sabbaths marked against you. I advise you to spend much of your leisure in thinking over what you have heard at meeting. Let a portion of time be devoted to reading the bible. Here you will find rules for your conduct, consolation for your troubles; here you will find what is the reward of the righteous, and what the punishment of the wicked. You will see that the eye of God is upon the servant as well as the master, and that his holy book gives directions to the bond-woman as well as the free. Much that I have said in this letter might have been enforced by texts from scripture, that would apply to your situation; but I chose that you should read them in the bible, that they might make the deeper impression, and I advise you to commit them to memory,—such as the sixth chapter of Ephesians and many other passages which I leave you to select.

It is time to close this long letter; and yet I know not how to do it without giving you a few directions respecting your conduct towards your fellow-servants. Be civil and obliging; do not act on the selfish principle, that the more you do for them the more you will have to do; but when they are sick, shew your pity by lending a helping hand; when they are perplexed, give them your advice and assistance; and though you are not to conceal their faults, do not aggravate and make them worse than they really are. Are there any younger than yourself?—exercise patience towards them; do not scold them for the ignorance they cannot help, but teach them how to do things properly, and let them see by the pains you take that you desire to do them good. Those who practise self-denial, meekness, and forbearance towards the ignorant, who,

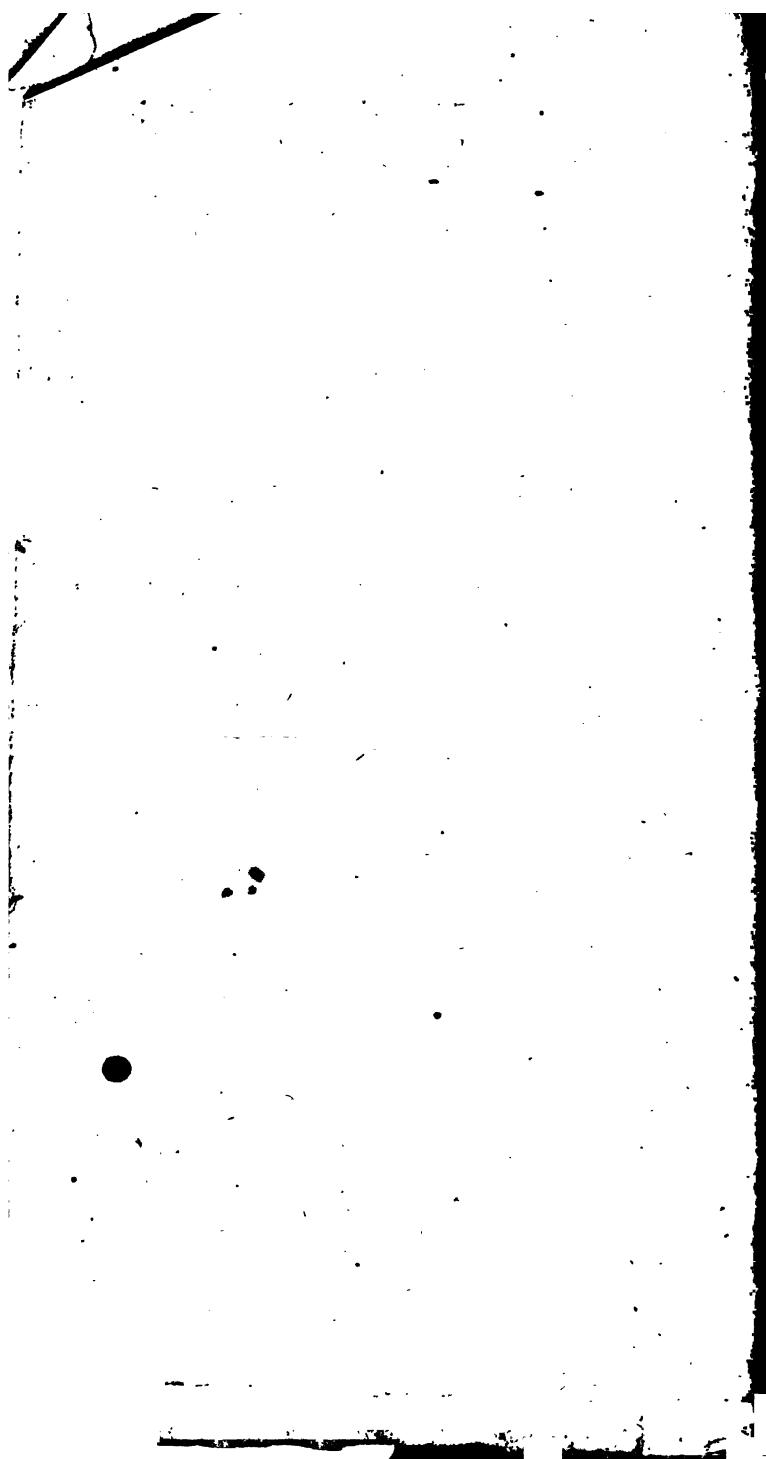
in season and out of season, endeavour to do good to those around them; by instruction and example, who, in the family in which they live, take upon them the task of teaching the ignorant, softening the temper of the rude, and gently leading them to industry and usefulness, will not lose their reward, though their labors are confined to the kitchen and unknown beyond the house in which they live.

I need hardly say that in your manners towards the men servants of the family, you should be discreet and modest. You know the worth of modesty; it is the loveliest ornament of woman; it gives beauty to the plainest features, and where it is wanting the prettiest face becomes disgusting.

And now, my dear Rebecca, I bid you adieu, with this last injunction, that you close the day—as you began it—with prayer to God. And may he bless you, and keep you from every snare, and make you a comfort to your parents, useful to your employers, and peaceful and contented in yourself!

And thus you will add greatly to the happiness of your friend,

LOIS.



1829



